When designing basins that will be visible to the public, we will look to you for how they can be made attractive, or at the very least, how you can limit their visibility.

WET BASINS: If the drainage area coming to the basin can include a large enough area, wet basins or ponds are typically most attractive (see photograph below with fountains often being added to maximize their appeal. If a fence is required, a decorative tubular steel or similar fence is strongly preferred over a chain link fence. Adding trees such as Weeping Willow or Bald Cypress can help soften the edges of the fenced pond and create a backdrop for a fountain.
Wet basins are the most effective method to remove pollutants to meet Chesapeake Bay requirements.

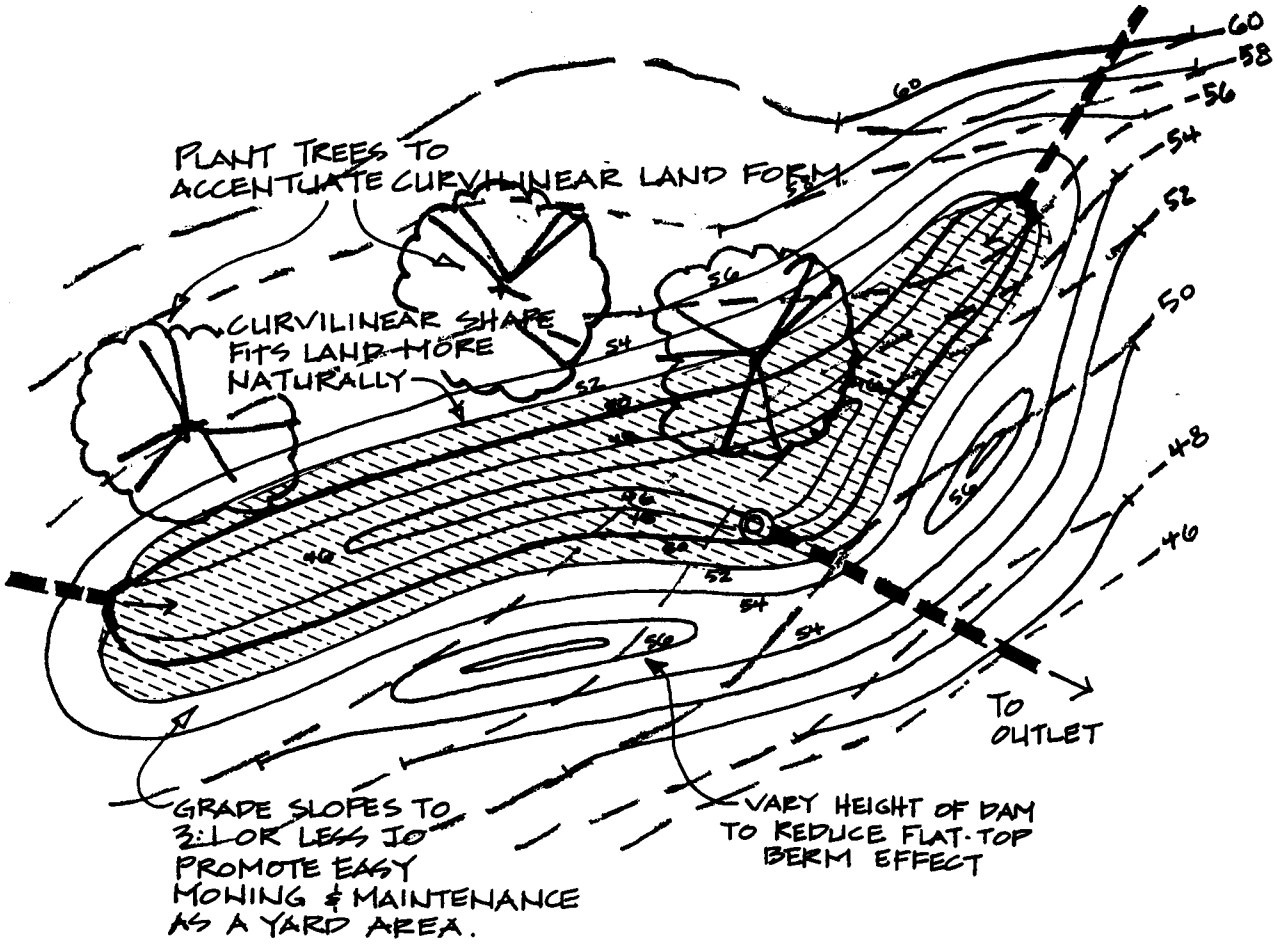
AQUATIC BASINS: Aquatic basins are often used when the basin is required for both Chesapeake Bay pollutant removal and stormwater management. While not as effective at removing pollutants as a wet pond, an aquatic basin with wetland plantings does remove pollutants while providing greater storage capacity for stormwater management. Aesthetically, aquatic basins can be visually unappealing if trash and debris is not removed or the design is box-shaped without appearing as a natural wetlands area. By using a curvilinear basin form that blends into existing land forms and appears to fit naturally on the site, the aquatic basin can be made to appear more as a natural wetland area than a rectangular man-made depression.

Shown above is a wet pond (BMP) at Chesterfield Marketplace Shopping Center that becomes a water feature with an attractive tubular steel fence around it.

DRY BASINS: As with aquatic basins, dry basins tend to be trash collectors, especially if fenced. Whenever possible, we will look to you to design the dry basin using curvilinear land forms without steep slopes to make the basin depression appear as a natural land form that becomes more of a yard than any appearance of a hard, rectangular basin. When designed in a manner that allows for regular mowing, cleanup of debris and general maintenance is done on a more regular basis.

Dry basins often need to be located in setbacks that have their own landscaping requirement to be fulfilled. Environmental Enginneering does allow landscaping within the basins, using the list of plants that they accept. See pages 12-c.1 through 12-c.5.

If the site dictates that a basin must be designed in a hard, rectangular fashion with steep side slopes, then landscaping should be applied that limits the view of the basin from the public view.



Shown above is an example of using curvilinear land forms, mowable slopes, and landscaping to make a dry basin fit more into the natural landscape.